4,89,000 tonnes of Mild Steel and 25,000 tonnes of Special Steel during 1996-97. SAIL is trying to export a higher tonnage during 1997-98.

In this connection, the Ministry of Steel takes up requests from SAIL, on merits, with various related Government agencies from time to time.

Export of Coir products

*517. DR. MOHAN BABU:

SHRIMATI JAYAPRADA NAHATA:

Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) the target of export of coir products fixed for the current financial year and the actual quantum of export made so far;

(b) the reason for decline in export thereof; and

(c) the measures taken to boost its export?

THE MINISTER OF INDUSTRY (SHRI MURASOLI MARAN): (a) The target fixed for export for 1997-78 is Rs. 245.00 crores. In 1996-97 against a target of Rs. 211.00 crores, coir products worth Rs. 207.49 crores (provisional) have been exported.

(b) The main reasons for the shortfall in export are:—

(i) General sluggishness in international trade;

(ii) Abundant availability of attractive products made from other natural fibres such as sesal, abacca, jute, grass, etc. in the international market.

(c) The Coir Board which is a statutory body has taken various measures to boost the export of coir and coir products in the international market. The Board has undertaken joint publicity programme with British and German Coir Associations for promoting consumption of Indian Coir in these countries. In order to increase the export of coir products, the Board participates in important exhibitions abroad, deputes officials in market development missions and undertakes publicity programme.

Improvement in the quality of national statistics

*518. SHRI BRATIN SENGUPTA:

SHRI MD. SALIM:

Will the Minister of PLANNING AND PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have contemplated to improve the quality of national statistics and the data collected by various organisations as also to make them easily available to people; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING AND PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION (SHRI YOGINDER ALAGH): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) A Statement containing the details is laid on the Table of the House.

Statement

Improvement in the quality of national statistics

1. The Indian Statistical System is a decentralised system, both territorially and subject-wise. Ministries and Departments at the Centre and the Corresponding Departments in the States are responsible for collection, compilation and dissemination of statistics relating to their subject areas. The Central Statistical Organisation (CSO) in the Department of Statistics at the national level and Directorate of Economics & Statistics in the States have the responsibility of coordination of statistical activities undertaken by different Ministries/Departments. The CSO compiles and disseminate data on National Accounts Statistics, Industrial Statistics based on Annual Survey of Industries, Economic Censuses and their follow up surveys, all-India Index of Industrial Production and Consumer Price Index for Urban Non-Manual Employees. The national Sample Survey Organisation in the Department conducts annual rounds of socio-economic surveys and undertakes the field work of Annual Survey of Industries and follow up surveys of the Economic Censuses.

2. The efficiency of the statistical system is